

REMARKS

Revocation of Powers of Attorney and Appointment of New Attorneys and/or Agents and Change of Correspondence Address is being filed concurrently with this Amendment. A Request for Change of Docket Number and Corrected Filing Receipt is also being filed concurrently. A courtesy copy of the Request is attached.

Claims 1-28 are pending in the above-referenced application. The Examiner rejected all of the claims. Claims 1 and 28 are now amended to include the features of claim 2, which is now cancelled. Claim 3 is amended to depend from amended claim 1. No new matter is introduced by these amendments.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,873,263 to Chang in view of U.S. Patent 5,315,521 to Hansen et al and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,182,275 to Beelitz et al.

As discussed in the specification as originally filed, there are numerous types of commercially available fluid purification equipment. However, such standard equipment does not necessarily satisfy the unique operating parameters of a particular fluid purification system. Such operating parameters can include the physical and chemical properties of the fluid, contaminants in the fluid, materials from which the purification equipment is made, operating conditions under which the fluid purification takes place, and system interconnections. Thus, system operators are forced to make tradeoffs among the various standard purification equipment or accept the high costs of building custom purification equipment that meet the unique operating parameters.

The present invention overcomes the limitations of the prior art by providing a method for identifying fluid purification equipment that is optimized for use in a particular fluid purification system. The method involves a relational database that contains specifications for a number of fluid purification equipment components. Access is provided to the database through

an interactive interface including a series of sequential inquiries that elicits information including the operating parameters of the particular fluid purification system. This “defining information” is received from user responses to the inquiries with each subsequent inquiry being dependent on the user responses to previous inquiries. The defining information is used to identify one or more fluid purification equipment components from the specifications in the database, such that the identified components are capable of being (i) assembled to form the ideal fluid purification equipment and (ii) operated to substantially satisfy the operating parameters of the particular fluid purification system.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 14 and 28 as being unpatentable over Chang in view of Hanson in further view of Beelitz. In particular, the Examiner states that Chang discloses a fluid purification system including various types of equipment and cites Hansen for the proposition that optimization of such systems through process equipment selection is well known in the art. The Examiner further states that Beelitz teaches a method for incorporating the use of a relational database and an interactive user interface in configuring, building and selling a customizable computer system. The Examiner then argues that one of ordinary skill in the art would have recognized the suitability of applying the method of Beelitz for the same intended purpose of configuring, building and selling a similarly customizable product, such as a fluid purification system as taught by Chang. We respectfully disagree.

As now recited in claims 1, 18 and 28, the term “defining information” has been amended to include “operating parameters of [the] particular fluid purification system.” The present invention method as now claimed involves, *inter alia*, “receiving said defining information from user responses to [a] series of sequential inquiries, each subsequent inquiry in the series being dependent on user responses to previous inquiries in the series” and “using said defining information to identify one or more of the plurality of fluid purification equipment components from the specifications in the database, the one or more identified component capable of being assembled to form a fluid purification equipment in a manner specific to said particular fluid purification system and operated to substantially satisfy the operating parameters of said particular fluid purification system for optimized fluid purification.” In other words, the user

provides the operating parameters of the target fluid purification system and, in response, the individual components that satisfy the operating parameters are identified and output to the user. Thus, the user does not need to have knowledge as to whether a particular assembly of fluid purification equipment components is capable of being operated to satisfy the desired operating parameters of the system. Support for these amendments can be found in the specification as originally filed at least on pages 3, lines 11-20; page 4, line 1 to page 5, line 3; page 6, lines 6-27; and page 7, line 15 to page 8, line 27.

In contrast, Beelitz teaches a system in which the user selects the individual components for a customized computer system. The user is presented with an initial list of selectable component options for implementation on a target computer system. Each subsequent list contains component options that are “compatible” with a prior component selection. For example, referring to Figs. 2-6 of Beelitz, a user builds a customized computer system by selecting a individual components from compatible lists of processor types, RAM, operating systems, software programs, etc. However, the fact that a set of selected components may be “compatible” for implementation on a target computer system does not necessarily mean that the resulting system is capable of satisfying the desired operating parameters. Thus, in Beelitz, the user must have knowledge that the particular selection of components will yield the desired operating parameters that are expected of the desired computer system.

Applicant maintains that Beelitz involves non-analogous art relative to Chang and Hansen and contains no suggestion or motivation to combine the references.

For at least these reasons, it is believed that base claims 1 and 28 are novel and nonobvious and should be allowed. By virtue of their dependancy to base claim 1 respectively, the same arguments apply to dependant claims 3-27 such that the features of claim 1 in combination with the features of the dependant claims are neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited prior art of record.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that all claims (claims 1, 3-28) are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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